299.934
THE
103

ULT LIBRARY
BANGALORE.
Accn. No 103

ULT LIBRARY
BANGALORE.
Accn. No 103

ओं

B F C

THEOSOPHY

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

THE BROTHERHOOD OF HUMANITY

THE STUDY OF OCCULT SCIENCE AND PHILOSOPHY

AND ARYAN LITERATURE

Vol. LXIV 1975-1976

ULT LIBRARY
BANGALORE.
Accn. No 103

Published and Edited by

THE THEOSOPHY COMPANY

THEOSOPHY HALL 33RD ST. AND GRAND AVE.

LOS ANGELES, CALIF. 90007, U.S.A.

OBJECTS OF THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

I *To form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste, or color;*

II *The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and*

III *The investigation of the unexplained laws of Nature and the psychical powers latent in man.*

THEOSOPHY was established as a monthly publication in November, 1912, by Robert Crosbie. It is devoted to the Objects of the Theosophical Movement. The publisher is The Theosophy Company, of Los Angeles, California, U.S.A., an incorporated association legally empowered to receive donations and bequests in furtherance of these Objects, which are repeated in its charter. THEOSOPHY is edited independently of any theosophical society or other organization. The Publishers assume full responsibility for all unsigned articles therein.

103
299.934
THE

SUBSCRIPTIONS: No subscriptions are accepted for less than one year of 12 numbers, but subscriptions may begin with any desired number. All subscriptions, orders for single back numbers, and back volumes, bound or unbound, should be accompanied by the necessary remittance. Price $5.00 per annum; single numbers of the current volume, 50 cents each; back numbers, 75 cents each; back volumes, unbound, available; for library style binding, prices on request. *Volumes I and XII are out of print.*

COMMUNICATIONS: Contributions submitted for publication should be typewritten double-spaced on one side of the paper only, with wide margins, and copies should be in all cases retained by the writers, as no manuscripts are returned.

BEQUESTS AND DONATIONS: Gifts and legacies will be gladly received from those in sympathy with the objects of this Magazine when such benefactions are unencumbered and unrestricted. Donors may make their gifts to THE THEOSOPHY COMPANY. Such contributions are tax exempt.

THE THEOSOPHY COMPANY
245 WEST 33RD ST., LOS ANGELES, CALIF. 90007, U.S.A.

INDEX TO THEOSOPHY

VOLUME 64

NOVEMBER, 1975—OCTOBER, 1976

A

Acquired Habits 78

Aim," "The Sole 225

Ammonius, The Way of 130

A New Plateau 65

A Question of Readiness 161

Articles, Mr. Judge's 129

A Time of Trial 321

Awakening, Cycles of, ... 1

Awakening, Timely 257

B

Becoming Involved 373

Bodies, Reflections on 277

C

Centenary Cycle, The 193

Clairvoyance, Thoughts on 112

Comment, Letters, Questions 14, 50, 86, 117, 147, 183, 212, 239, 274, 300, 339, 365

Communication, Theosophical 33

Cycle, The Centenary 193

Cycles of Awakening 1

Cyclic Possibilities 353

D

Defining Theosophy 97

Desires, The Three 368

Devachan 267, 294, 328

Discovery of Ignorance, The 21

E

Evil, Good and 361

F

Facets of the Self 215

G

Good and Evil 361

H

Habits, Acquired 78

I

Ignorance, The Discovery of....21

Inner Planes, Learning from....165

Internal Nature, On the Science of....41

Involved, Becoming....373

Isis Unveiled and the Three Objects....303

Isis Unveiled, Studies in....11, 42, 73, 105, 136

J

Judge's Articles, Mr....129

K

Karma, The Nature of....53

L

Learning from Inner Planes....165

Letters, Questions, Comment....14, 50, 86, 117, 147, 183, 212, 239, 274, 300, 339, 365

Life," Notes on "Problems of....242

Lookout, On the....22, 54, 89, 119, 150, 185, 217, 247, 279, 309, 342, 374

M

Man of Mind," "The....289

Matrix of Karma, The....53

Matter, Spirit and....260

Mind," "The Man of....289

Modifications of the Thinking Principle, The....334

N

Nature of Karma, The....53

Need for Teachers, The....19

New Plateau, A....65

New, Spiritualism, Old and....174

Notes on "Problems of Life"....242

O

Old and New, Spiritualism....174

On the Lookout....22, 54, 89, 119, 150, 185, 217, 247, 279, 309, 342, 374

On the Science of Internal Nature....41

P

Plateau, A New....65

Plato, The Secret Doctrine in Pythagoras and....166, 203, 231

Possibilities, Cyclic....353

"Problems of Life," Notes on....242

Pythagoras and Plato, The Secret Doctrine in....166, 203, 231

Q

Question of Readiness, A.....161

Questions, Comment, Letters.....14, 50, 86, 117, 147, 183, 212, 239, 274, 300, 339, 365

R

Rays of Truth," "The.....111

Readiness, A Question of.....161

Reflections on Bodies.....277

"Reward for Unmerited Sufferings".....16

S

Science of Internal Nature, On the.....41

Secret Doctrine in Pythagoras and Plato, The.....166, 203, 231

Self, Facets of the.....215

Sole Aim," "The.....225

Spirit and Matter.....260

Spiritualism, Old and New.....174

Studies in Isis Unveiled.....11, 42, 73, 105, 136

Sufferings," "Reward for Unmerited.....16

T

Teachers, The Need for 19

Theosophical Communication 33

Theosophy, Defining 97

Thinking Principle, The Modifications of the 334

Thoughts on Clairvoyance 112

Three Desires, The 368

Three Objects, Isis Unveiled and the 303

Time of Trial, A 321

Timely Awakening 257

Trial, A Time of 321

Truth," "The Rays of 111

U

Unmerited Sufferings," "Reward for 16

W

Way of Ammonius, The 130

ॐ

"Great Sifter" is the name of the "Heart Doctrine," O Disciple.

—*The Voice of the Silence*

THEOSOPHY

VOLUME 64 NOVEMBER, 1975 NUMBER 1

CYCLES OF AWAKENING

IN one of his most valuable articles, "The Synthesis of Occult Science," Mr. Judge takes note of the fact that *The Secret Doctrine* directly engages the Scientific thought of the age. He enlarges on this by saying that "while the Secret Doctrine itself apprehends equally both philosophy and science, in addressing itself to the thought of an age it must recognize here, as it does everywhere, the *law of cycles* that rules in the intellectual development of a race no less than in the revolutions of suns and worlds, and so address the times from that plane of thought that is in the ascendant." Yet, he goes on to explain, the purpose of Madame Blavatsky's mission was to supply the philosophic synthesis so evidently missing in the modern scientific outlook—an intention which could not help but bring scientific ideas, where partially correct, into closer relation with occult truth.

This was a goal which, during the period of the last twenty-five years of the nineteenth century, did not seem altogether unlikely of achievement. There were scientists of that time—William Crookes in chemistry, de Quatrefages in anthropology, and several others of note—whose intuitive perceptions were so notable as to justfy lengthy quotation of their views by H.P.B. She was never reluctant to give full credit to the beneficent influence of those whom she termed "the just representatives" of modern science, and in "What Are the Theosophists?" she quoted approvingly a New England clergyman who declared that science was disabusing the world of "hideous illusions," teaching people

how to reason, and making possible the conception of "a *living* God." Pursuing this idea, Mr. Judge remarked in "Theosophical Don'ts" that it is wrong to condemn all scientists as "materialists." Even Huxley, he said, had done service, especially in admitting "consciousness to be a third factor in the universe, not a part of force or matter," while Spencer also had many good things to say. "Besides," Mr. Judge concluded, "if you want H.P.B. on the matter, you can read her words that the truth is to be found in a union of science with occultism."

How, then, is this synthesis to come about? Again and again, Madame Blavatsky points to the error of scientists who invade the region of metaphysics and dogmatize on the basis of inferences from sense data. The inductive basis of scientific inquiry, she said, cannot be adequate for discoveries concerning causation on levels above the physical plane, which require the development of faculties still dormant in all except an exceptional few. Even the most intuitive of the scientists, such as William Crookes, whose discoveries brought the conception of matter far closer to the ancient, philosophical teaching, would be unable to complete the picture of the physical universe without help from occult science. Commenting on Crookes's sense of being baffled by the origin of the chemical elements, she said that modern materialism had closed the door to access to "the Eastern Occult views," which could alone fill in the "gaps" of scientific knowledge. (*S.D.* I, 623.) And the scientists, she implied, would finally be led to consider the occult doctrines of causation—involving spiritual intelligence behind all natural phenomena—only by the breakdown of purely physical explanations. As she put it (*S.D.* I, 620): "They [the scientists] will be driven out of their position not by spiritual, theosophical, or any other physical or even mental phenomena, but simply by the enormous *gaps* and *chasms* that open daily and will still be opening before them, as one discovery follows the other, until they are finally knocked off their feet by the ninth wave of simple common sense."

We are considering, here, the broad sweep of human development toward greater knowledge of the realities of nature, a better understanding of things as they are. *The Secret Doctrine* affords a number of clues to the mode of that development, of which the following, quite plainly, is of central importance:

> The evolution of the GOD-IDEA proceeds apace with man's own intellectual evolution. So true it is that the noblest ideal

> to which the religious Spirit of one age can soar, will appear but a gross caricature to the philosophic mind in a succeeding epoch! The philosophers themselves had to be *initiated into perceptive mysteries*, before they could grasp the correct idea of the ancients in relation to this most metaphysical subject. Otherwise—outside such initiation—for every thinker there will be a "Thus far shalt thou go and no farther," mapped out by his intellectual capacity, as clearly and unmistakably as there is for the progress of any nation or race in its cycle by the law of Karma. Outside of initiation, the ideals of contemporary religious thought must always have their wings clipped and remain unable to soar higher; for idealistic as well as realistic thinkers, and even free-thinkers, are but the outcome and the natural product of their respective environments and periods. The ideals of both are only the necessary results of their temperaments, and the outcome of that phase of intellectual progress to which a nation, in its collectivity, has attained. (*S.D.* I, 326-27.)

What, in this passage, is the meaning of "intellectual evolution"? We have an answer to this question in the second volume (167), where H.P.B. speaks of beings who have evolved far beyond the stage of present mankind: "The Sons of Wisdom, or the *spiritual* Dhyanis, had become 'intellectual' through their contact with matter, because they had already reached, during previous cycles of incarnation, that degree of intellect which enabled them to become independent and self-conscious entities, *on this plane* of matter." Here spoken of, it seems clear, is the Intellectual or Manasic line of evolution, represented by the Manasa-Dhyanis who give intelligence and consciousness to man—the evolution which, in conjunction with the monadic or spiritual line of development, proceeds by self-induced and self-devised efforts, "ascending through all the degrees of intelligence, from the lowest to the highest Manas."

The quotation given above (from pages 326-27 of Vol. I) suggests that there are two rhythms or concurrent cycles of human development—that of the race in general, to which definite limits are marked out, from cycle to cycle, by the law of Karma, and the accelerated growth made possible by initiation. The rule in the latter case is stated in H.P.B.'s article, "Let Every Man Prove his own Work":

> The Theosophist who desires to enter upon occultism takes some of Nature's privileges into his own hands, . . . and soon discovers that experiences come to him with double-quick rapidity. His business is then to recognize that he is under a

—to him—new and swifter law of development, and to snatch at the lessons that come to him.

Various questions may occur, such as what is the relationship between these two sorts of development—the general intellectual advance of the race, and the individual progress afforded by initiation. And how may the presence in the world of occult schools of initiation affect or assist in the general development? Here, again, we have a clear answer from H.P.B., who often pointed out that the Adepts have little interest in aspirants to initiation who think only of their own growth or evolution. The key to initiation, from the Theosophical point of view, is altruism, a true willingness "To step out from sunlight into shade, to make more room for others." It follows that those who enjoy the privileges of initiation are in duty bound to put their talents and unfolding insight at the service of the race at large, in whatever ways their Karma allows.

There is a parallel to this obligation in the work of the adepts and *nirmanakayas* across the centuries. Two statements describe the influence exercised by such Intelligences on general human development:

> Occult philosophy divulges few of its most important vital mysteries. It drops them like precious pearls, one by one, far and wide apart, and only when forced to do so by the evolutionary tidal wave that carries on humanity slowly, silently, but steadily toward the dawn of Sixth-Race mankind. For once out of the safe custody of their legitimate heirs and keepers, those mysteries cease to be occult: they fall into the public domain and have to run the risk of becoming in the hands of the selfish—of the *Cains* of the human race—curses more often than blessings. Nevertheless, whenever such individuals as the discoverer of *Etheric Force*—John Worrell Keely—men with peculiar psychic and mental capacities are born, they are generally and more frequently helped than allowed to go unassisted; groping on their way, though, if left to their own resources, falling very soon victims to martyrdom and unscrupulous speculators. Only they are helped *on the condition that they should not become, whether consciously or unconsciously, an additional peril to their age: a danger to the poor,* now offered in daily holocaust by the less wealthy to the very wealthy. (*S.D.* I, 558.)

> The exact extent, depth, breadth, and length of the mysteries of Nature are to be found only in Eastern esoteric sciences. So vast and so profound are these that hardly a few, a very few of the highest Initiates—those *whose very existence is known but to a small number of Adepts*—are capable of assimilating

> the knowledge. Yet it is all there, and one by one facts and processes in Nature's workshops are permitted to find their way into the exact Sciences, while mysterious help is given to rare individuals in unravelling its arcana. It is at the close of great Cycles, in connection with racial development, that such events generally take place. We are at the very close of the cycle of 5,000 years of the present Aryan Kaliyuga; and between this time and 1897 there will be a large rent made in the Veil of Nature, and materialistic science will receive a death-blow. (*S.D.* I, 611-12.)

These, then, are some—by no means all—of the factors affecting the intellectual or manasic development of humanity. Their importance is indicated in a statement by one of the Theosophical Adepts, quoted by Mr. Judge in *The Ocean of Theosophy*: "There never was a time within or before the so-called historical period when our predecessors were not moulding events and 'making history,' the facts of which were subsequently and invariably distorted by historians to suit contemporary prejudices." As to the efficacy of the means used—which must be various—we might consider that a large area of modern (post-Newtonian) physical theory is inferentially based on the discovery of X-rays by Roentgen in 1895, and of radioactivity by Becquerel in 1896 —both more or less by "accident," as historians of science tell us. The radioactivity of uranium—which Becquerel noticed by placing some of this material against a photographic plate and wrapping it all in black paper—along with the discovery of radium by the Curies in 1898, led to the electron theory of matter, then to quantum mechanics, and all the diverse consequences in technology, industry, and related areas of scientific practice and thought.

When H.P.B. spoke of the "death-blow" to materialistic science to come as a result of what was to happen before 1897, she doubtless had in mind the final dissipation of the "billiard-ball" conception of the atom, which was doomed by the discovery of radioactivity. Matter, it is now believed, is no more than foci or concentrations of energy, a radical revision indeed of nineteenth-century thinking on the subject.

But what about the broad philosophic synthesis Mr. Judge referred to in relation to the underlying content of *The Secret Doctrine*? We could say that the transformation of matter into energy in modern physical theory opens the door to theories of non-physical causation, but that the basis in science for the existence

of non-physical entities as causal agents is still lacking. Whether or not the science of the next fifty or a hundred years will be able to find a place for disciplined recognition of non-physical dynamics remains to be seen. Meanwhile, H.P.B.'s comment—*"The whole issue of the quarrel between the profane and the esoteric sciences depends upon the belief in, and demonstration of, the existence of an astral body within the physical,* the former independent of the latter" (*S.D.* II, 149)—may indicate the character of the discoveries which will become steps of reconciliation.

Has there as yet been any movement of thought in this direction? If we leave for another occasion review of the modern researches into morphogenesis—including the work of biologists such as Hans Driesch, and more recently Edmund Sinnott, various cytological studies, the investigations of geneticists and embryologists, reaching a climax in the findings of H. S. Burr and his associates at Yale (all reported at some length in the series, "The Astral Body," appearing in Vol. 28 of this Magazine)—there is reason to go back to the days of the eighteenth century and the extraordinary influence of Anton Mesmer to find the beginnings of an awareness in the West of the principles of psycho-dynamics. Not until the healing activities and doctrines of Mesmer was there any theoretical or even practical basis for understanding the subtler forces of nature, especially those which obtain their direction from the disciplined will of an adept or some exceptional person. On the basis of Mesmer's demonstrations, H.P.B. was able to introduce for the consideration of moderns the idea of *magic* as standing for the natural powers of highly developed human beings; and also as the key to various vital energies in nature. In *Isis Unveiled* (I, 23) she wrote:

> Schweigger proves that the symbols of all the mythologies have a scientific foundation and substance. It is only through recent discoveries of the physical electro-magnetical powers of nature that such experts in Mesmerism as Ennemoser, Schweigger and Bart, in Germany, Baron Du Potet and Regazzoni, in France and Italy, were enabled to trace with almost faultless accuracy the true relation which each *Theomythos* bore to some one of these powers. The Idæic finger, which had such importance in the magic art of healing, means an iron finger, which is attracted and repulsed in turn by magnetic, natural forces. It produced, in Samothrace, wonders of healing by restoring affected organs to their normal condition.

After another discussion of the demonstrations of Du Potet and

Regazzoni, H.P.B. remarked (*Isis,* I, 129): "Mesmerism is the most important branch of magic; and its phenomena are the effects of the universal agent which underlies all magic and has produced at all ages the so-called miracles." Needing recognition, in all such connections, is the fact that such wonders can hardly be understood unless their relation to the active intelligence of a human operator is shown. Hence the importance of Mesmer and his colleagues, whose influence, despite their rejection by the French Academy, has been far-reaching and immeasurable. Using the conceptions of Mesmerism and the record of his achievements, H.P.B. was able to provide the rationale for a wide range of psychical phenomena. The explanation of the laws and forces behind Mesmerism led naturally to the broader account of the sevenfold nature of the universe and man, which then served, as was necessary in the nineteenth century, as introduction to a thorough accounting for the manifold phenomena of Spiritualism —all this being little more than preface to her presentation of the idea of adeptship, and the extraordinary powers latent in all human beings. "Man-spirit proves God-spirit," she had declared in the Preface to *Isis Unveiled,* an equation which lies at the foundation of all that is taught in philosophical terms, since this access to true ideas about Deity leaves behind the confusions of superstition and the blindness of priestly imposture.

"Messengers," H.P.B. said in "The Cycle Moveth," are "sent out periodically in the last quarter of every century westward"— a periodic work of the fraternity of Adepts that has gone on, she suggests, "ever since the mysteries which alone had the key to the secrets of nature had been crushed out of existence by heathen and Christian conquerors." It is evident, moreover, that these Teachers, who may have widely differing roles, draw together and use the harvest of influence left by their predecessors in earlier centuries. Pioneers such as Paracelsus, Bruno, Boehme, and in the eighteenth century Mesmer, Cagliostro, St. Martin, and St. Germain, were all made use of by H.P.B. in elaborating the Theosophic philosophy and giving applications of its teachings. A reading of *Isis Unveiled* in particular will show the importance of the cultural background, illustrating H.P.B.'s effort to develop another line of psycho-moral demonstrations and explanations that might, when brought to maturity in the twentieth century, make possible a more comprehensible initial synthesis of science with occultism.

At the time that *Isis* was written, H.P.B. later remarked in the Introductory to *The Secret Doctrine* (xxxviii), "the disclosure of many things, freely spoken about now, was forbidden." One may think that today, with a passage of a century, bringing the absorption of a wide range of ideas preparatory for further progress—progress in the understanding of the God-idea, and of the laws of the hidden side of nature—a new capacity for assimilation may reveal itself in representative members of modern civilization. Not only was it predicted by H.P.B. that during the present era the vast antiquity of the Secret Doctrine would begin to be recognized, but she also said that—"In Century the Twentieth some disciple more informed, and far better fitted, may be sent by the Masters of Wisdom to give final and irrefutable proofs that there exists a Science called *Gupta-Vidya;* and that, like the once-mysterious sources of the Nile, the source of all religions and philosophies now known to the world has been for many ages forgotten and lost to men, but is at last found."

One notable contrast between nineteenth-century thought and the present is the emphasis, today, on psychological and psycho-religious considerations. The interest, indeed the faith, in physical science has been diminishing for almost a generation. People no longer turn to the so-called "hard" sciences for guidance in a philosophy of life. There is even a sense in which they turn away from the disciplines on which technology—including military technology—is based, now asking their questions of psychologists and sometimes sociologists. It might even be suggested that the restoration of the idea of a higher nature in human beings, through the psychology and motivation scheme of A. H. Maslow, has instituted a quiet revolution in contemporary thinking about the self. The popular phrases, today, are concerned with "human potentiality" and "creativity" and "self-actualization." There is no longer much serious talk about "God," although scholars such as Joseph Campbell are pointing out the identity of the true self with Deity in Eastern religion, while a social thinker, Hannah Arendt, has made it clear that the only meaning in the "God is dead" propositions is that we can no longer accept "the way God has been thought of for thousands of years." It well may be that a general return to philosophical and metaphysical thinking about the God-idea will have to be preceded by a deeper realization of the self—by a more profound grasp of both the complexity of human nature and the heights of human possibility. After all,

realization of the Self is not different from evolution of the God-idea—even though, in Western thought, the two may seem poles apart.

One way of taking the philosophic measure of present-day thinking is by dipping into the current literature of essays by talented, non-academic figures, to see at what level of serious conception such writers reflect on the enduring issues of life. With what subtlety do they examine questions about the self and human nature? We have mentioned Maslow, who was an essayist as well as a psychologist (his books have sold widely to the general public), and readers of THEOSOPHY may recall the remarkable quality of the poetic prose of Annie Dillard. In such work it is not difficult to recognize an advance—an undeniable growth—in perception over the similar writing of a century ago. A notable instance of this quality is found in the essays of Joyce Carol Oates, a novelist who has added a functional moral dimension to literary criticism. It sometimes seems that writers of this caliber have assimilated the major impact of the Theosophical distinction between higher and lower manas—although without the metaphysics and precise terminology—and now write naturally with instinctive grasp of its significance. In an essay which appeared in *Psychology Today* for February, 1973, Miss Oates said:

> Long-cherished, sacred myths are now being explored, the collective mind of our world is making a supreme effort to transcend itself.
>
> One of the holiest of our myths always has been the unique, proud, isolated entity of a "self": perhaps it is through an exploration of this phenomenon that our other myths will be exposed, devaluated or given a new value, absorbed in the consciousness of a new world.

Next she looks at the difference between those who accept the impress of the times in the shaping of their attitudes and feelings, and those who deliberate and choose what they will think and do:

> It is my conviction that all human beings "create" personality. Some do so passively, helplessly, and are in a sense *created* by others, whom they come to fear or hate; others create their personalities half-consciously, and are therefore half-pleased with their creations, though they suspect something is missing; a few human beings, gifted with the ability to see themselves as "other," and not overly intoxicated with the selfness of the self, actually devise works of art that are autobiographical statements of a hypothetical, reality-testing

> nature, which they submit with varying degrees of confidence to the judgment of their culture.

Miss Oates writes of the egoistic folly of the artist who supposes his work is the "personal," unique production of a separate self. "The illusion of originality and isolation," she says, "can be very destructive to the writer who is, for personal reasons, unstable to begin with." Applying this idea, she observes: "The suicides and mental breakdowns of gifted people (see A. Alvarez's *The Savage God: A Study of Suicide*) are well known, and may in part be traced to a totally erroneous concept of what the 'self' and 'personality' are."

She concludes this brief essay by saying:

> In surrendering one's isolation, one does not surrender his own uniqueness, he only surrenders his isolation. It is time for psychology to take very seriously the propositions advanced by all the great mystics—that the "self" is part of a larger reservoir of energy, call it any name you like. As long as the myth of separate and competitive "selves" endures, we will have a society obsessed with adolescent ideas of being superior, of conquering, of destroying. . . . Many myths must be exposed and relegated to the past, but the myth of the "isolated self" will be most difficult to destroy.

The failures of science to give place and part to egoity in the natural scheme may have their correction, during the coming cycle, at the hands of thinkers of this sort—in whose work may be recognized something of the harvest of a century's growth in both mind and heart, now turned into moral and manasic awareness.

Life in all its forms is the phenomenal disturbance created in the world of matter and energy when mind comes into it.

—JOSEPH NEEDHAM

STUDIES IN ISIS UNVEILED

PRE-EXISTENCE, METEMPSYCHOSIS, REINCARNATION

WHERE, WHO, WHAT *is* GOD? *Who ever saw the* IMMORTAL SPIRIT *of man, so as to be able to assure himself of man's immortality?*

The Oriental philosophy has room for no other faith than an absolute and immovable faith in the omnipotence of man's own immortal self. This omnipotence comes from the kinship of man's spirit with the Universal Soul—God! The latter can never be demonstrated but by the former. Man-spirit proves God-spirit, as the one drop of water proves a source from which it must have come. Prove the soul of man by its wondrous powers—you have proved God!

The unity of God, the immortality of the spirit, belief in salvation only through our works, merit and demerit; such are the principal articles of faith of the Wisdom-religion. Nirvana represents the dogma of the spirit's immortality. To reach the Nirvana means absorption into the great universal soul, the latter representing a *state,* not an individual being or an anthropomorphic god, as some understand the great EXISTENCE. A spirit reaching such a state becomes a *part* of the integral *whole,* but never loses its individuality for all that. Henceforth, the spirit lives spiritually, without any fear of further modifications of form; for form pertains to matter, and the state of *Nirvana* implies a complete purification or a final riddance from even the most sublimated particle of matter.

Nirvana means the certitude of personal immortality, immortality in *Spirit,* not in *Soul,* which, as a finite emanation, must certainly disintegrate its particles, a compound of human sensations, passions, and yearning for some objective kind of existence.

Both the human spirit and soul are pre-existent. But while the former exists as a distinct entity, an individualization, the soul exists as pre-existing matter, an unscient portion of an intelligent whole. Matter is as indestructible and eternal as the immortal

---

NOTE.—This article is made up of passages from *Isis Unveiled*, topically arranged. The pages from which the statements are taken are given at the conclusion of the article. This article is part of a series that was first printed in volumes 5 and 6 of THEOSOPHY.

spirit itself, but only in its particles, and not as organized forms. *Annihilation* means, with the Buddhistical philosophy, only a dispersion of matter, in whatever form or *semblance* of form it may be; for everything that bears a shape was created, and thus must sooner or later perish, *i.e.,* change that shape; even our astral bodies, pure ether, are but illusions of matter, so long as they retain their terrestrial outline. The latter changes, says the Buddhist, according to the merits or demerits of the person during his lifetime, and this is metempsychosis. The purifying process of transmigrations—the metempsychoses—esoterically relates to the purely spiritual peregrinations of the human soul. It is not in the dead letter of Buddhistical sacred literature that scholars may hope to find the true solution of its metaphysical subtilties. The mastery of every doctrine of the perplexing Buddhist system can be attained only by proceeding strictly according to the Pythagorean and Platonic method; from universals down to particulars. The key to it lies in the refined and mystical tenets of the spiritual influx of divine life.

The cause of reincarnation is ignorance of our senses, and the idea that there is any reality in the world, anything except abstract existence. Thus, like the revolutions of a wheel, there is a regular succession of death and birth, the moral cause of which is the cleaving to existing objects, while the instrumental cause is *karma* (the power which controls the universe, prompting it to activity), merit and demerit. "It is, therefore, the great desire of all beings who would be released *from the sorrows of successive birth,* to seek the destruction of the moral cause, the cleaving to existing objects, or evil desire." They, in whom evil desire is entirely destroyed, are called *Arhats.* At his death, the Arhat is never reincarnated; he invariably attains Nirvana, the world of *cause,* in which all deceptive effects or delusions of our senses disappear.

The *metempsychosis* was only a succession of disciplines through refuge-heavens to work off the exterior mind, to rid the *nous* of the *phren,* or soul, *that principle that lives* from *Karma* and the Skandhas (groups). It is the latter, the metaphysical personations of the "deeds" of man, whether good or bad, which, after the death of the body, incarnate themselves, so to say, and form their many invisible but never-dying compounds into a new body, or rather into an ethereal being, the *double* of what man was *morally.* It is the astral body of the kabalist and the "incarnated deeds" which form the new sentient self, as his *Ahancara* (the

ego, self-consciousness), can never perish, for it is immortal *per se* as a spirit; hence the sufferings of the newly-born *self* till he rids himself of every earthly thought, desire, and passion. Thus the disembodied *Ego,* through this sole undying desire in him, unconsciously furnishes the conditions of his successive self-procreations in various forms, which depend on his mental state and *Karma,* the good or bad deeds of his preceding existence, commonly called "merit and demerit."

The doctrine of *Metempsychosis* has been abundantly ridiculed by men of science and rejected by theologians, yet if it had been properly understood in its application to the indestructibility of matter and the immortality of spirit, it would have been perceived that it is a sublime conception. If the Pythagorean metempsychosis should be thoroughly explained and compared with the modern theory of evolution it would be found to supply every "missing link" in the chain of the latter. There was not a philosopher of any notoriety who did not hold to this doctrine, as taught by the Brahmans, Buddhists, and later by the Pythagoreans.

NOTE.—The volume and page references to *Isis Unveiled,* from which the foregoing article is compiled, are, in the order of the excerpts, as follows:—i, vi; ii, 116-17; ii, 320; i, 316-17; i, 328; i, 290; i, 289; i, 346; ii, 286-87; ii, 320; i, 8-9; i, 12.

WHAT IS MEANT BY "SOUL"?

What is precisely meant by Soul *in Theosophical literature? We say the "Soul of man," the "Soul of the world," the "Soul of things."*

W. Q. Judge.—Theosophical literature has not yet come to a *precise* meaning for "soul," nor can it until the English language has been so altered as to remove the confusion now existing among such terms as "soul" and spirit," and in the uses to which both are put. So long as we have in fact but two terms, *soul* and *spirit,* to designate so many beings, kinds of beings and powers as those are used for, just so long will there be confusion.

letters • questions • comment

Mind is said to be universal as a principle. But mind in the lower kingdoms is obviously different from its presence in man. How should this difference be understood?

Universal Manas is the consciousness in nature, including man. But mind in man has a particularized focus that becomes universal only when full knowledge of all beings is achieved self-consciously in manifestation. This realization is described by Patanjali as "discriminative knowledge of the nature of the soul and its environment." One result is complete lucidity of mind or, as Mr. Judge observes in his comment on Patanjali's aphorisms:

> The man who has attained to the perfection of spiritual cultivation maintains his consciousness, alike while in the body, at the moment of quitting it, and when he has passed into higher spheres; and likewise when returning continues it unbroken while quitting higher spheres, when re-entering his body, and in resuming action on the material plane.

In nature, this consciousness is limited to the range of awareness determined by the form, each kingdom providing the opportunities for the perfection of intelligence functioning under those conditions. But the self-consciousness distinctive to man is not present in these kingdoms as an active force. It is latent, and will remain so until its vehicles have been developed to the point of psychic individualization—capable of embodying the fire of self-consciousness and responding to the impulses given by higher beings who achieved their self-consciousness in prior cycles of evolution. This incarnation of Manas, or lighting up of mind, takes place at the appropriate point in the evolution of a universe, and seems to be repeated, in an analogous way, at the corresponding point of every cycle of learning.

But it is the mind in nature in the most general sense that makes it possible for the entities in the kingdoms below man to be affected by the impulses given by him. Their reaction to those impulses, however, is undiscriminated, involving no choice. The decision of *how* to respond is not yet theirs. This universal process of acquiring individuality—a focus of self-consciousness—is summed up, at the beginning of *The Secret Doctrine*, as the law of evolution itself:

> No purely spiritual Buddhi (divine Soul) can have an independent (conscious) existence before the spark which issued from the pure Essence of the Universal Sixth principle,—or the OVER-SOUL—has (a) passed through every elemental form of the phenomenal world of that Manvantara, and (b) acquired individuality, first by natural impulse, and then by self-induced and self-devised efforts (checked by its Karma), thus ascending through all the degrees of intelligence, from the lowest to the highest Manas, from mineral and plant, up to the holiest archangel (Dhyani-Buddha). (I, 17.)

Universal intelligence is activated in man and nature by the desire to learn, to grow in awareness of existence. The evidence of design everywhere apparent in the birth, growth, death, and transformation of the simplest organisms, as well as in the most advanced human being, is testimony to the all-pervasive intelligence embodied in the universe. A limited reflection of this intelligence in action is seen in the capacity of men to formulate opinions about any and every thing—opinions differing according to background, experience, mental, physical, and psychical heredity. But a relative synthesis is also possible, of men's best opinions —their efforts to make unifying sense of the world they live in— recorded in art, literature, and history, sometimes achieving the level of greatness. Whenever this synthesis grows from protracted effort to restore the spirit of man to its place in the universe, man emerges as a creator in his own right, and the inspiration of higher mind becomes to a greater extent accessible—a way to further awakening of self-conscious mind—to the whole race of men.

The capacity for growth, then, shows mind to be a universal principle because everything in manifestation has this capacity. The differences of the human mind from mind in nature are those of quality and development, not of the fact of consciousness. The human being has all the capacities of consciousness evident in the lower kingdoms and, in addition, increasing awareness that he possesses these powers—the capacity to identify with everything, to build a vehicle of more far-reaching awareness, and yet to know that he is none of these forms or avenues of perception.

Through man's striving to learn to unite his mind with nature, building on the mental plane symbolic forms more and more representative of the universal potentialities of mind, and changing himself and his environment in the process, all the limited forms of mind are attuned to higher expression.

"REWARD FOR UNMERITED SUFFERINGS"

KARMA AS JUDGE, GUIDE, AND REWARDER

IN the *Key to Theosophy,* on page 161, the author uses a phrase which has been objected to on the ground that a strict construction of it overthrows the whole doctrine of Karma. The words referred to and the contiguous sentence are:

"Our philosophy teaches that Karmic punishment reaches the Ego only in its next incarnation. After death it *receives only the reward for the unmerited sufferings endured during its past incarnation.*"

The italicized portion is the part objected to, and the objection raised is that, if all that happens to us so happens because it is our Karma, then it cannot be *unmerited*: hence, either the statement is incorrect or Karma is not the law of justice, but there must be some other one governing man and the vicissitudes of his life.

Let us go further down the same page and see if some sentences in the same paragraph do not bear upon the meaning of the author. She says: "If it may be said that there is not a mental or physical suffering in the life of a mortal which is not the direct fruit and consequence of some sin in a previous existence: on the other hand, since he does not preserve the slightest recollection of it in his actual life and feels himself not deserving of such punishment, and therefore *thinks* he suffers for no guilt of his own, this alone is sufficient to entitle the human soul to the fullest consolation, rest, and bliss in his *post-mortem* existence. Death comes to our spiritual selves ever as a deliverer and friend."

All students of theosophy known to me believe that Karma is the great governing law, that all suffering and reward come from and through Karma; and, as I understand from the published and unpublished views of H. P. Blavatsky, she holds the same opinion. Therefore, such being the case, what we have to enquire into is the meaning intended to be conveyed by the passages cited. There is no doubt whatever that the author of the *Key* agrees, except

---

NOTE.—This article was first printed by Mr. Judge in the *Path* for March, 1891, and reprinted in THEOSOPHY I, 435.

perhaps about hell, with the Buddhist priest who, writing several years ago in the *Theosophist*[1] upon this subject said:

> In this light Karma may be defined as . . . that irresistible force which drags the criminal into the hell fire amidst his loud lamentations, the powerful hand that rescues the wretch from the merciless hands of the infernal angels and takes him to a happier place for the amelioration of his miserable condition, or the heavenly angel *who bears away, as it were, the enraptured soul to the blissful abodes above* and takes it back after a very long course of heavenly enjoyments to this world, or to hell itself, paying little or no attention to the sorrowful tales of the reluctant soul.

Construing together the sentences in the paragraph from the *Key to Theosophy*, we find that she says, in effect, in the latter sentences on the same page, that all suffering is the direct fruit and consequence of some sin committed in a previous existence, but that as the *personality* in the life when the suffering comes has no recollection of the cause which brought it about, the punishment is *felt* by that personality to be undeserved, and another cause is thus set up which has its action in the *post-morten* condition. The difficulty raised by the objection put is that the whole matter has been made objective, and Karma has been looked upon as a material or objective law, and the *post-mortem* state placed in the same category. The true Ego neither suffers nor enjoys, and is not bound at any time by Karma; but as *Devachan* is a subjective condition in which the Ego therein creates for itself out of its own thoughts the surroundings fit for it, so we may say, without at all interfering with our conceptions of Karma, that after death this Ego receives the rewards for the sufferings which *it thought* were unmerited in the life just quitted. The word "unmerited" as written in *The Key* is not to be construed as being used by any Karmic power, but as the conception formed by the Ego during life of the propriety or impropriety of whatever suffering may have been then endured.

For, as we have seen in other studies, Devachan—the *post-mortem* state under consideration—is a condition wherein no objective experiences are undergone by the Ego, but in which the thoughts of a certain sort had during life act in producing it, or rather within its sphere, the blissful subjective experiences necessary for the resting of the soul. Hence if when in the mortal frame it considered itself unjustly treated by fate or nature, it set up then

---

[1] *Theosophist*, vol. I, p. 199.

and there the causes for bringing about a so-called reward for the suffering which to it seemed unmerited, just so soon as it would be released from the body and the causes be able to act in the only place or state which will permit their action.

This blissful state, as intimated in the quotation made from the *Theosophist,* is Karmic reward in the plane of Devachan. The "Karmic punishment" referred to in the *Key* is not the opposite of this, but is the opposite of Karmic reward acting on the plane of objective earth life. For the opposite of devachanic reward or bliss must be on a similar plane, such as the "hell" spoken of by the Buddhist priest, or Avitchi. If these distinctions are clearly borne in mind, there cannot be much difficulty with any of these questions.

To me Karma is not only judge, it is also friend and deliverer. It is essentially just. The conditions are laid down. If I comply, the result inevitably follows. It is my friend because it will, just as inevitably as life and death, give me a rest in devachan where the tired soul which needs recuperation as well as the body will find what is best for it. And a mere phrase like "unmerited suffering" invented by me in my ignorance here upon earth will be one of the factors used by this very Karma to bring about my peace and joy, albeit that still again inexorable Karma awaits me at the threshold of Devachan to mete out in my next appearance upon this terrestrial stage my just deserts. And thus on and ever on and upward we shall be led from life to life and stage to stage, until at last the conviction has become an inherent portion of our being that Karma is not only just but merciful.

A STUDENT

Control is the power of direction, and when exercised in one way, leads to its exercise in other ways until it covers the whole field of operation.

—ROBERT CROSBIE

THE NEED FOR TEACHERS

THROUGHOUT the ages, tradition records the existence of men of surpassing excellence, beings developed far beyond the capacities of ordinary men—men supremely human. Whatever the status accorded them by history—bringing responses ranging from worship to persecution—they are portrayed as figures whose power and influence suggest a psychological and spiritual gap hardly to be bridged by common understanding. Yet the hungering or aspiring mind cannot content itself with thinking of beings of such unapproachable attainments as unique or "out of place" in a universe whose infinite diversity does not negate, but requires, an underlying bond. The universe is a *uni*verse.

These beings are men, yet such extraordinary men! The mind cries out for a rationale that will accommodate the Rishis, a Christ, a Pythagoras, or a Plato, within the potentialities of one mankind.

The ideas of Karma and Reincarnation make of every man a god in essence: a being who both creates and survives all the limitations of time and space; and who, through his imagination and will, is potentially capable of resolving any problem, surmounting any obstacle. For such a being, the ultimate source of judgment—imperfect though its practical exercise may be—cannot reside anywhere but within. What, then, is the function or role of these great beings, if man, unlimited in his prospects, must also be his own authority?

For answer, the unity of the One Life, while expressed in diversity, points to the fact that no being acts entirely alone. And learning of any kind, which for man is characteristic growth, does not take place in a vacuum. Even the most solitary achievements are attained with the support, or at least example, of others who have gone before. High and low, then, and beginners and graduates in the school of life, are all inseparably linked in a vast reciprocity. For human awareness this universal interdependence becomes a debt of love that bids repayment in compassion for those yet to achieve.

But how is "help" to be given to learners for whom the price of knowledge is that it be self-acquired? While the authority of the powerful is unwilling to share its competence, the quality of the higher knowledge about man and nature is that it cannot be held in isolation—it must be shared; yet it cannot be fully communicated either. The problem is that no Ego, in its primordial nature, differs from another Ego—the spiritual Egos of ordinary men, or even of an idiot, are not of lower grade than those informing the most advanced beings; while the differences, arising from the relative capacity of the physical casing, the brain and body, to transmit and give expression to the light of the real, inner man, become ever more apparent with the progressive descent into matter and consequent separateness. It follows that during the evolutionary cycle a natural hierarchy emerges on the objective plane. This means that the primary role of great beings is that of teachers, not rulers, of their less advanced brothers, although there have been times when rulers *were* teachers. Perhaps the knowledge of the divine heroes is most like the lighting of a fire. An awakened mind can provide the spark that may ignite the minds of others. Each man's learning is his own affair or relationship with the universe, but he can be nourished by true teachings, and encouraged and inspired by example, perhaps even spurred by the lessons in apparent failure.

Thus the "authority" of great beings is that they are able to be the teachers of men in whatever ways men are able to learn. Their goal is not that their superiority be worshipped by others, even because of their greater knowledge, but to help others to achieve it; their powers, the beneficent forces of all nature focused in man, are directed to this end. In the service of this cause they could be expected to appear among men in many guises and at whatever time there is opportunity to promote the further awakening of the race to the high calling of being fully human.

Thus Krishna said he would come, not just in periods of general enlightenment that invited high instruction, but "whenever there is a decline of virtue and an insurrection of vice and injustice in the world." He would incarnate from age to age "for the preservation of the just, the destruction of the wicked, and the establishment of righteousness." The god-like nature of those who tread this path, whatever their degree of learning, is indicated by the fact that Krishna, though a god himself in Arjuna's eyes, is also the sage and his charioteer. "Whatever the path taken

by mankind, that path is mine, O son of Pritha."

Leaving behind them landmarks in writings, monuments, symbols—whatever will endure and be treasured by the men to come—the friends and brothers of mankind act to lead men to claim their birthright. For the authority of this excellence is not only from having it, but also in the power to arouse longing for it in others. As an ancient saying, repeated in our time, has it:

> A Siddha-Purusha (perfect man) is like an archeologist who removes the dust and lays open an old well which has been covered up by ages of disuse. The *Avatara,* on the other hand, is like an engineer who sinks a new well in a place where there was no water before. Great Men give salvation to those only who have the waters of piety hidden in themselves, but the *Avatara* saves him too whose heart is devoid of love and dry as a desert.

The Discovery of Ignorance

No Theosophist ought to be contented with an idle or frivolous life, doing no real good to himself and still less to others. He should work for the benefit of the few who need his help if he is unable to toil for Humanity, and thus work for the advancement of the Theosophical cause. No working member should set too great value on his personal progress or proficiency in Theosophic studies; but must be prepared rather to do as much altruistic work as lies in his power. He should not leave the whole of the heavy burden and responsibility of the Theosophical movement on the shoulders of the few devoted workers. Each member ought to feel it his duty to take what share he can in the common work, and help it by every means in his power. No fellow has a right to remain idle, on the excuse that he knows too little to teach. For he may always be sure that he will find others who know still less than himself. And also it is not until a man begins to try to teach others, that he discovers his own ignorance and tries to remove it.

—H. P. Blavatsky

on the lookout

Objection to Manipulation

An article in the March *Harper's,* "Fearful of Science," by Horace Judson, considers the threat felt by many people in the anticipations and plans of the "new biology," and suggests that most of these anxieties are poorly founded since the manipulative capacities of the molecular biologists, as the writer shows, giving chapter and verse, have been much exaggerated. Yet the fears are still widely expressed and emphatic. It is these fears that Mr. Judson wishes to understand. He concludes that people generally regard scientific invasion of the processes of heredity and natural procreation as a threat to identity. He compares this feeling to the past resistance to Darwinian claims, which were an attack on man's "sense of the inviolability of his own form," and suggests that a similar shock had come earlier with the theory of Copernicus, displacing the theologically familiar Ptolemaic astronomy. But these instances of psychological disturbance are not really the same: Copernicus (and Giordano Bruno) brought embarrassment to the pseudo-science of the Churchmen, and shook orthodox belief, while the idea that man has a peculiarly *human* form is a deeply intuitive feeling which should be distinguished from the effects of religious indoctrination.

Threat to Ideas about "Self"

Mr. Judson's general point, however, is worth developing. He speaks of how Freudian and Behaviorist doctrines have been found upsetting because they have the effect of "dethroning man even in the self," with the result that—

> The most difficult intellectual task of the last part of our century is to understand and come to terms with the ways in which the individual is given his form and content—even to his unconscious—by societal forces from without. The self itself is a dying metaphor, no more than a knot in a tangle, an intersection in the social network, a phantasm shaped by fields of force that compress it into life—the plasma pinched at the heart of a controlled fusion. . . .

> A scientist, and an old friend, said to me: "If we accept that man is not noble, not really a discrete entity, but rather a kind of pliable, malleable creature whose very structure can be modified to suit the end of others, then our own self-image must begin to change. Instead of a collection of possibly exalted individuals, we become a glob."

True Conception of Self

Here, indeed, is the deeply egoic and spontaneous answer of thoughtful persons to the reductionism of psychology and biology. Meanwhile, at a popular level, the sudden epidemic of new religions—extravagant in their "spiritual" proclamations; often unreasoned in the support of their claims—is nonetheless evidence of the cry of the moral and spiritual intelligence in man, and of its determination not to be swept out of existence by a science which is both amoral and insistently analytical. Obviously, there is profound need of the "deeper realization of the self" for which Theosophists strive, and for those age-old metaphysical teachings which are able to take the place of threatened "self-images" that are bound to be worn away by the materializing and reducing manipulations of scientific inquiry and experiment. In Theosophy one learns that the self is not an "image," but a subject, a monad, a center of consciousness, and one grows familiar, also, with those intermediate planes and conditions which reach from the purely subjective to the grossly external—bringing an understanding of the inner vehicles of the self, which may be regarded as plastic images, and whose formations and transformations result from the cyclic processes of reincarnation.

Light on Plato

A brief passage in E. M. Forster's life of G. Lowes Dickinson (Harcourt Brace, 1934) gives insight into the indirect effect of the Theosophical Movement in the last century. Born in 1862, Dickinson was a young man when the influence of Sinnett's *Esoteric Buddhism* began to be felt in England. He heard Olcott speak and was much impressed by Mohini Chatterji. His love of Plato, which pervaded his life and his writings, was deepened by the experience. He wrote in a letter to a friend in 1884:

> Never again will I regret that I've spent years over Greek. I'm sitting at "Plato's feet" at present, and have really never experienced such "ecstasy" in the literal sense; why, I can't tell you, but so it is. I seem to have got a new light for reading him, and it seems all clear and quite necessarily and incontro-

vertibly true. And moreover in the "Phaedrus" is much palpable "Esoteric Buddhism": do read it again, if you haven't lately, and there you will find the indestructibility of life, and the successive incarnations, and the one great consciousness. . . . I can see clearly that until one has learnt perfectly to control oneself and to understand those mysterious laws that give rise to different opinions and passions, one has no right to expect to do any work that shall be necessarily wise and good. . . . I can't tell why, but parts of the Phaedrus and Symposium have come to me in this week like Revelation, and just for an hour or so a day everything has seemed "stale and unprofitable" except somehow or other to follow Plato in the paths he hints at as leading to "the life of the gods." It's worth having felt, if it all subsides to nothing.

"We Are All Very Ignorant"

Dickinson's ardor did subside, yet there is a muted presence of this devoted feeling throughout his work—his books on the Greeks, the political studies, and his analyses of the causes of war. In 1931 he wrote to an Indian inquirer:

> When I was a young man I became much absorbed first in Plato, and then Plotinus. I am one of the few Englishmen who have studied Plotinus from cover to cover, though that was years ago. I thought then that there must be some way of reaching ultimate truth (or perhaps I should say ultimate experience) by some short cut. I suppose that the principal thing that happened to me, in the course of my life, was the disappearance of this idea. *I feel now that we are all very ignorant and quite incredibly and unimaginably inadequate to deal with the kind of questions we ask about ultimate things.* I know however that there do exist what are called mystic states and I am interested when I come across anyone genuine who claims to have them. But what they signify really, when had, I cannot of course pretend to judge. I am now pretty near death and naturally my mind moves in that direction. What death really means no one can tell, perhaps it means different things to different people. I am content and indeed obliged to "wait and see."

Gleams of Light

In the Introductory to *The Secret Doctrine* (I, xlv), H.P.B. speaks of the Neo-Platonists and Gnostics as the last of those who gave focus to "the bright rays of light streaming from the æons of time gone by, unobscured by the hand of bigotry and fanaticism." There must have been many, reborn from that period, who struggled as individuals to renew that focus in themselves, during the nineteenth century and after, with varying

success, in a time when the clouds of materialism and skeptical denial rested heavily upon the minds of even the most thoughtful men of the West. There were, indeed, several Neoplatonic revivals during the rise of European civilization—one in Florence at the end of the fifteenth century, another in England in the time of Elizabeth, and again in Germany in the work of Herder, Lessing, Fichte, and others. Gleams of Platonic and Neoplatonic inspiration seem clear in the works of all these men, as in the Transcendentalist movement in America and England. Dickinson, in his way, can hardly be denied a similar inspiration. His attitude toward the first great war was that war is always "folly and crime," and he did what he could to give constructive shape to the League of Nations. Insight into his spirit is provided by a delightful book, *Appearances* (1914), which is an account of his travels in the East and elsewhere. John McTaggart, who wrote extensively on reincarnation, and whose *Some Dogmas of Religion* is a brilliant criticism of the personal-God idea, was one of his closest friends.

Moment of Awakening

In the Feb. 27 issue of *Rolling Stone*—a magazine which, like many of its contemporaries, confuses ribaldry with editorial daring—an interview with Henry Miller discloses a current of thought in the famous novelist's life which helps to explain some of the rather remarkable passages in the work of this talented Rabelaisian writer of mixed tendencies, now in his eighties. Speaking of what he meant by "conversion," Miller recalled a day in Paris in 1934. He was reading, he said, books by Mme. Blavatsky, when he came across a photograph of her face. He told the interviewer:

> "... I was hypnotized by her eyes and I had a complete vision of her as if she were in the room.
>
> "Now I don't know if that had anything to do with what happened next, but I had a flash, I came to the realization that I was responsible for my whole life, whatever had happened. I used to blame my family, society, my wife ... and that day I saw so clearly that I had nobody to blame but myself. I put everything on my own shoulders and I felt so relieved. Now I'm free, no one else is responsible. And that was a kind of awakening, in a way. I remember a story of how one day the Buddha was walking along and a man came up to him and said: 'Who are you, what are you?' and the Buddha promptly answered 'I am a man who is awake.' We're asleep, don't you know, we're sleepwalkers."

More Than a Surface Blemish

It was perhaps to be expected that critics of Theodore Roszak's indictment of scientific reductionism would claim him to be an adherent of some old "Gnostic" sect, of which there were many. Replying to this charge in a letter to *Science* for March 7, Mr. Roszak denies that he is a proponent of "Gnosticism," although acknowledging that his views may overlap certain areas of the Gnostic tradition. He uses the term "gnosis" in its independent philosophical meaning, defining it in this letter as "a kind of knowledge other than scientific knowledge—a knowledge that is augmentative rather than reductive, that honors and invites the aesthetic, sensuous, compassionate, and visionary possibilities of experience as well as the rational and technical." He explains that his controversy is with those who maintain that *"only* science is a valid way of 'knowing' the nature of things." He concludes:

> Again to define the controversy: my contention is that reductionism has been a central and integral part of the scientific tradition since its inception in the 17th century; that science has provided a peculiarly fertile medium for its proliferation; that it distorts our understanding of man, society, and nature more today than ever before; and that the scientific community remains as oddly impotent to purge the vice now as in the past. In short, I do not think reductionism is a skin blemish of science, but the blood poisoning of the profession. This is not a failing that can be offset by listing all the nonreductionist science one can think of. Of course there is plenty. I accept that as being so. But nonetheless—and even more disconcertingly—reductionism continues to command full scientific status. This, I think, will continue to be so until scientists reflect deeply upon the psychology of objectivity and its proper place in our total experience of nature.

Integration and Therapy

As corrective of limiting objectivity, Mr. Roszak proposes a modern conception of Gnosis which would include scientific knowledge within the general program Abraham Maslow called "hierarchical integration." An enriched and expanded science, open to every avenue of perception, would result from this reform. The letter ends:

> It is impossible for me to see that what I have suggested [in *Where the Wasteland Ends*, pp. 374-78] deserves to be called "anti-scientific" or "anti-rational." If, however, that formulation is held to be an "attack" on science, so be it. But it is in-

tended as a therapist's attack upon a neurotic complex that profoundly flaws the epic grandeur and humane potentialities of science.

Science's Proper Role

Madame Blavatsky's comments on science were of two sorts. She spoke of its legitimate area of research and conclusion, consistent with its premises, and of the value of what science accomplishes in this way. She said in *The Secret Doctrine* (II, 663-64):

> . . . the province of exact, real Science, materialistic though it be, is to carefully avoid anything like guess-work, speculation which *cannot be* verified; in short, all *suppressio veri* and all *suggestio falsi*. The business of the man of exact Science is to observe, each in his chosen department, the phenomena of nature; to record, tabulate, compare and classify the facts, down to the smallest minutiæ which *are presented to the observation of the senses with the help of all the exquisite mechanism that modern invention supplies, not by the aid of metaphysical flights of fancy*. All that he has a legitimate right to do, is to correct by the assistance of physical instruments the defects or illusions of his own coarser vision, auditory powers, and other senses. He has no right to trespass on the grounds of metaphysics and psychology. . . .
>
> Instead of keeping to this, what does many a so-called man of science do in these days? He rushes into the domains of pure metaphysics, while deriding it. . . . He attacks spiritual beliefs and religious traditions millenniums old, and denounces everything, save his own hobbies, as superstition. He suggests theories of the Universe, a Cosmogony developed by blind, mechanical forces of nature alone, far more *miraculous and impossible* than even one based upon the assumption of *fiat lux* out of *nihil*—and tries to astonish the world by such a wild theory; which, being known to emanate from a scientific brain, is taken on *blind faith* as very scientific and the outcome of SCIENCE.

"A Kind of Religious Mysticism"

But she also spoke with respect of those philosophical and intuitive scientists who refused to dogmatize, who did not share in materialistic assumptions, and whose theories often approached in some respects the occult teachings. *The Secret Doctrine* is replete with quotations from such men. She described what would be necessary if science were to expand its limits, becoming able to join with the ancient Gnosis or Occult Science:

> Accept the explanations and teachings of Occultism, and, the blind inertia of physical Science being replaced by the *intelli-*

> *gent active* Powers behind the veil of matter, motion and inertia become subservient to those Powers. It is on the doctrine of the illusive nature of matter, and the infinite divisibility of the atom, that the whole science of Occultism is built. It opens limitless horizons to *substance* informed by the divine breath of its soul in every possible state of tenuity, states still undreamt of by the most spiritually disposed chemists and physicists. . . . To blend the two sciences, the archaic and the modern, requires first of all the abandonment of the actual materialistic lines. It necessitates a kind of religious mysticism and even the study of old magic, which our Academicians will never take up. (I, 520.)

For scientists, as Mr. Roszak suggests, to "reflect deeply on the psychology of objectivity and its proper place in our total experience of nature," would surely be a step in the right direction.

Anthropological Confusion

In commenting on several books on ancient man (*New York Review of Books*, May 29), J. Z. Young, an anatomist, seems to suggest that the recent discoveries of the Leakeys, while exciting to the general public, have done little more than increase confusion on the subject of the origin of man. There are now so many sorts of remains, he says, that no straight-line pattern of descent is possible. "Darwin's book," he remarks in a moment of levity, "should have been called 'The Abolition of Species'." After speaking of the Leakey's finds at Olduvai (in Tanzania), he says:

> Richard Leakey [son of Louis Leakey], piloting his own plane and using every possible modern resource, is busily turning up human fossils every year elsewhere in Africa. And yet, in a way, and sadly, new finds instead of consolidating knowledge raise ever fresh controversy. Why is it that in the study of ancestors it is so hard to maintain a scientific objectivity? The subject is interesting but not all *that* exciting intellectually and certainly not important economically. Perhaps man is so genuinely interested in philosophical questions that when even simple people learn that their species once did not exist they are so amazed that they lose their objectivity in discussing the matter.

"Still Not Clear"

The idea that there may be half-conscious intuitive resistance to the ape-origin doctrine does not seem to occur to this writer, who, for all his useful scientific sophistication, is still convinced of the derivation of man from some species of animals. But he honestly reports the uncertainty in scientific circles:

> What then can we do? Human anatomists are still in con-

siderable confusion in these matters. No one seriously doubts that we have gradually evolved from a nonhuman ancestry, but it is still not clear how best to describe and name the stages. This is indeed a challenging situation and scientists are beginning to respond to it. The possibility of giving an accurate date to fossil finds by the use of isotopes has already transformed the subject. And it now seems that fossils of creatures rather like men may be several million years old. There is evidence that not one but several lines of near humans have existed, only one of which gave rise to *Homo Sapiens*.

"Further from Animal Ancestry"

From a new book by C. E. Oxnard Mr. Young gleans the fact that the *Australopithecine* fossils found in Africa, regarded by many as possible ancestors of man, "were not in the direct line of evolution that led to *Homo Sapiens*." The views of this writer (in *Uniqueness and Diversity in Human Evolution*) seem a good illustration of the present inclinations of anthropological opinion:

> Oxnard ends his book with some comments on the implications of the fact that there may perhaps have been several lines of manlike creatures running parallel for millions of years. It means that the manlike human characteristics we are so proud of today have been won in a long struggle. Also that we are much further from animal ancestry than people like Moss and Lorenz seem to think.

The Hidden "Link"

The "confusion" of the anthropologists is likely to go on for a number of years more, but there is some advance in the fact that it is now openly admitted. Meanwhile, the search for distinctively human skeletal remains—bony structures not specialized in the direction of ape-functions, which are irreversible—has little hope of success. The situation is still as H.P.B. described it in 1888. Beginning with a quotation from a scientist of her time, she wrote:

> "While we can trace the skeletons of Eocene mammals through several directions of specialization in succeeding Tertiary times, man presents the phenomenon of an *unspecialized* skeleton which cannot fairly be connected with any of these lines." ("Origin of the World," p. 39, by Sir W. Dawson, LL.D., F.R.S.)
>
> The secret could be soon told, not only from the esoteric but even from the standpoint of every religion the world over, without mentioning the Occultists. The "specialized skeleton" is sought for in the wrong place, where it can never be found. It is expected to be discovered in the physical remains of

> man, in some pithecoid "missing link," with a skull larger than that of the ape's, and with a cranial capacity smaller than in man, *instead* of looking for that *specialization* in *the superphysical essence of his inner astral constitution, which can hardly be excavated from any geological strata!* Such a tenacious, hopeful clinging to a self-degrading theory is the most wonderful feature of the day. (*S.D.* II, 720.)

It still is.

Growing out of and into Religion

In *Go East, Young Man,* Justice William O. Douglas' autobiography published last year, the eminent jurist gives an engrossing account of how his religious views were formed. "One awful consequence of my early religious training," he says, "was fear of supernatural punishment." He feels that the church exploits childhood feelings of guilt to regiment children, and he dates his "awakening" from a meeting with a "hypnotic revivalist" in Yakima —"I was always grateful to that showman for revealing what a fraud he was." Because of those early guilt feelings, and the threat that God could send a bolt of lightning that would find him under the bed, it took a long time for him "to appreciate the beauty and grandeur of electrical storms." But as years passed he came to feel that Buddha, Zoroaster, and others, "like Jesus, were also sons of the Lord, sent to do his business." His faith, Justice Douglas relates, was regenerated when he visited a Buddhist monastery in the Himalayas in 1951. There he heard a story which, he said, he would like to believe—that Jesus, after the Resurrection, had come east along the caravan trails and "had been on the monastery's faculty for ten years"!

One with Surrounding Life

One might call Justice Douglas' faith a "religion of nature":

> The Eastern philosophies have respect for all forms of life, animal as well as human. Behind these philosophies are deep-seated animistic beliefs. In the Himalayas, altitude sickness is attributed to the god who rules over the pass or the peak. The aboriginals of Australia who, like the Hawaiians, probably come from Malay stock, are associated at birth with a wild animal, bird, or fish, which becomes the child's guardian and which that human being, in turn, honors or protects. I know a family in Hawaii that for centuries has had the shark as its guardian.
>
> This identification of people with animals, creating a community relation with a particular animal, means that a species of

brotherhood is also created. Man is not on earth to dominate, destroy, and kill for the sake of showing off his superiority. Man becomes one with the life of his area of earth.

Every Person Could Do It

I came to believe that Jesus was, like other men, the son of God, that, as Alan Watts wrote, he had "intense experiences of cosmic consciousness—of the vivid realization that one's self is a manifestation of the eternal energy of the universe, the basic "I am." The powerful lesson of the New Testament is that if Jesus could identify with God, every person could do the same. The Hindus and Buddhists believe that. Each of them can say "I am God" without being guilty of subversion or blasphemy. For that represents the striving for a goal of which all people are capable of seeing, understanding, and fulfilling in part.

The most impressive aspect of this book—which is intensely interesting—is the sturdy self-reliance of the writer, not the least example of which was the means by which William Douglas strengthened himself, while still a boy, by long hikes and camping trips in the mountains, after a serious bout with polio. Concerning the matter of his religion, one is likely to recall the definition offered by Thomas Vaughan of a theosophist—"one who gives you a theory of God or the works of God, which has not revelation, but an inspiration of his own for its basis."

Astral Hearing?

A recent study of auditory hallucinations in deaf people has raised the question of how the sensation of hearing can be stimulated by memory. The *New York Times* (Feb. 16) says:

A 75-year-old man who had been deaf for 10 years said he heard a voice singing hymns he had once sung in a church choir. An 83-year-old woman who had been deaf for 25 years said she heard a continuous medley of Irish jigs and Christmas carols.

Five doctors in Boston studied the two cases and found that the symptoms apparently were not psychiatric in nature but physiological.

This report in the *Journal* of the American Medical Association suggested that there may be other explanations for the phenomena than as symptoms of some malfunction such as tumors, epilepsy, or mental disorders, though it said nothing of what these alternatives might be. Such cases are rare in medical annals and the doctors conducting the study hope that wider publication of

them will call attention to the condition. Many people may be reluctant to reveal they have had experiences of this kind for fear they will be interpreted as evidence of psychiatric disorder.

Model Organ Unimpaired

To the Theosophical student these effects may seem as unremarkable as reports of feeling pain in a "phantom limb," a common experience among amputees, suggesting that the astral counterparts of lost members or failing organs of sense respond to internal stimuli. The complexity of this vital "astral" body is indicated in H.P.B.'s article "Psychic and Noetic Action." The multiple constitution of the inner man suggests that the internal counterparts of the organs of sense perception may function even though damage to the physical instrument cuts off all external communication. The admission by scientists that cases of auditory hallucination are not necessarily due to mental aberration is a step toward recognition of an aspect of intelligence that is within, and may be independent of, the bodily functions. But the fact that the sounds heard, in these instances, quite obviously originated in the *memory* of former experiences, raises the further question of whether other memories of quite a different order than the personal recollections of this or other lives, could be lying dormant in the mind. A hungry stomach may evoke the vision in the brain of a past banquet, but in which organ did the memories of the songs originate if the ears can no longer hear?

Inner Principle

H.P.B.'s article offers the possibility of a rational explanation:

> . . . In that mansion called the human body the brain is the front-door, and the only one which opens out into Space. All the others are inner doors, opening in the private building, through which travel incessantly the transmitting agents of memory and sensation. The clearness, the vividness, and the intensity of these depend on the state of health and the organic soundness of the transmitters. But their reality, in the sense of trueness or correctness, is due to the "principle" they originate from, and the preponderance in the Lower *Manas* of the *noetic* or of the *phrenic* ("Kamic," terrestrial) element.